



Rosamond Community Services District

Official Newsletter of Rosamond Community Services District - September 2020

How the water adjudication lawsuit impacted RCSD's water supply

The topic of water rights in Rosamond has been a hot button issue for some time. In this special edition of our newsletter, we will explain the history and the present situation of our water supply.



History of Water in Antelope Valley and East Kern County

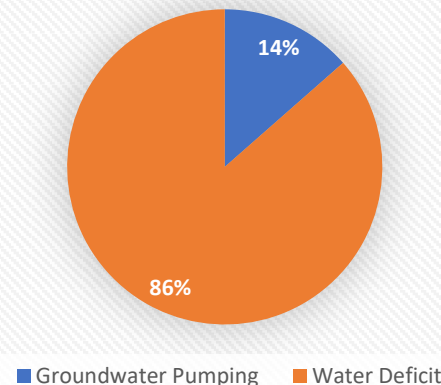
Antelope Valley and East Kern County water companies, farmers, developers, and residents have long pumped groundwater to serve their needs. Many early records describe water in our region as being abundant, seeping up from the earth in artesian springs. As the Antelope Valley and East Kern County communities grew, so did their need for water.

For decades, the Antelope Valley's and East Kern's groundwater supplies were in a state of overdraft, which means you are pumping the groundwater faster than it can replenish itself. This led to a water adjudication lawsuit that would inevitably structure how much water each of Antelope Valley and East Kern County communities could pump from the ground. This lawsuit culminated in a legal sustainability plan overseen by a watermaster that defined property owners' water rights, including how much water they could pump.

Today's Water Situation

RCSD needs approximately 3,000 acre-feet (1 acre-foot = 325,850 gallons) of water per year for our customers. The lawsuit resulted in RCSD going from pumping a high of 2,987 acre-feet of water per year to only being allowed to pump a maximum of 404 acre-feet of water per year. This accounts for only 14% of Rosamond's total annual need.

Rosamond's Annual Water Need Appx 3,000 Acre-feet



"We now need to purchase approximately 2,600 acre-feet of water from outside sources each year for our customers."

Securing Water for Rosamond's Future

Since water rights are directly tied to land ownership, one of the most effective ways of getting more water for our community is by purchasing land with water rights.

Another way of securing water is by buying it from the Antelope Valley East Kern Water Agency (AVEK). AVEK brokers water from the Department of Water Resources. Water prices often vary wildly, depending on supply and demand.

Currently, the water rights for one acre-foot of water (in perpetuity) through AVEK costs approximately \$10,000. However, AVEK's water supply also fluctuates with water availability, meaning AVEK customers often only receive a portion of their purchased water allotment. To receive this portion, RCSD also has to pay for the water they didn't receive.

It is possible to take advantage of the fluctuations in price through a water bank. Water banking involves purchasing water and releasing it into the natural underground water stores where it remains until it is pumped out in the future. Through banking, it is possible to purchase water when it is plentiful and inexpensive to use during droughts when water costs are high.

RCSD participates in the Willow Springs Water Bank, which is located near our community and can bank up to 500,000 acre-feet of water. Through the water bank, RCSD can purchase water when prices are low and store it.

Another way to secure more water is by earning pumping credits for replenishing the groundwater. This is the strategy behind the construction of the enlarged Rosamond Water Reclamation Plant (RWRP). This plant's increased capacity will allow RCSD to reclaim and percolate water that would previously be left to evaporate.

Once complete, the RWRP will treat wastewater to make it safe and percolate it into the ground to recharge our natural water stores. This will grant RCSD 1,200 acre-feet in pumping credits, helping make up the water pumping deficit created by the adjudication lawsuit. This prevents RCSD from spending upwards to \$12,000,000 on water purchased from AVEK and provides a much more stable and environmentally sustainable water supply.

RCSD is also continually looking for opportunities to purchase property with water rights to help make up our water deficit. This makes investments in properties with water rights vital to our community.

As you can see, water in our valley is governed by a complex set of rules. The RCSD leadership team is at the forefront of responsibly managing our community's water rights and enlarging our water portfolio, ensuring our customers have continued access to safe, clean, fresh water.



Rosamond Community Services District Blood Drive

Location: Board Room next to the library at
3179 35th Street W
Rosamond, CA 93560

**Thursday, October 22, 2020
12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

